Unit .21

Session .01

Jesus Reveals His Power

Scripture

Mark 1:21-28, 35-42

21 They went into Capernaum, and right away he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and began to teach. **22** They were astonished at his teaching because he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not like the scribes. **23** Just then a man with an unclean spirit was in their synagogue. He cried out, **24** "What do you have to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" **25** Jesus rebuked him saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" **26** And the unclean spirit threw him into convulsions, shouted with a loud voice, and came out of him. **27** They were all amazed, and so they began to ask each other: "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." **28** At once the news about him spread throughout the entire vicinity of Galilee. … **35** Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he got up, went out, and made his way to a deserted place; and there he was praying. **36** Simon and his companions searched for him, **37** and when they found him they said, "Everyone is looking for you." **38** And he said to them, "Let's go on to the neighboring villages so that I may preach there too. This is why I have come." **39** He went into all of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. **40** Then a man with leprosy came to him and, on his knees, begged him: "If you are willing, you can make me clean." **41** Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched him. "I am willing," he told him. "Be made clean." **42** Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

Intro Options

Main Point:
Jesus' teaching and miracles reveal His divinity.

Option 1

A network television studio is starting a new reality show: Heroic Normal Folks. To start the show, the studio has asked your students to put forward candidates for the show. These people should be normal, everyday people, but they conduct themselves in such a way that they are heroes. The TV show will follow them around for a month or two to try to capture their heroism.

When your students submit a candidate, they need to include three characteristics of that person that make him or her heroic. The studio will use these three characteristics as their main criteria for choosing their contestants.

Break your students into small groups (or they can work solo). They should come up with someone (preferably a real-life person, but not necessarily) whom they would present to the studio and their three reasons why. When everybody has a person and three characteristics, let everyone share with the larger group.

Debrief what characteristics showed up. Ask how they would feel if the three characteristics of a candidate were power, purpose, and compassion. In today's lesson, Jesus will reveal Himself as someone with those three characteristics.

Option 2

A billionaire tycoon has just passed away. She leaves behind an empire of businesses valuing well over fifteen billion dollars. She had become estranged from her family, so her will formed a small committee that was to accept nominations from all over the world for one person who would inherit her fortune and empire. To make things a little easier on the committee, nominations could only include the person's name and three characteristics about that person.

Ask each student to write down who their nominee would be and the three reasons why. Students may nominate themselves or someone else. Then have them share their answers with the larger group. If you wish, you can vote on who would inherit the fortune from among your student's choices.

In the example we just did, people presented their best three characteristics. When Jesus publicly revealed Himself, He chose to present His power, His purpose, and His compassion. How do you (your students) react to those three characteristics?

TEACHING PLAN

Read Mark 1:21-28.

As we see in this passage, it became evident to those around Jesus that His words were not like the typical teaching they were used to hearing in the synagogue. The scribes of the day did not merely copy things down but also helped the people understand scriptural principles by teaching and interpreting the law. They were scholars, yet they did not interpret the Scriptures using solely their own opinion; rather, they quoted and cited other experts and scholars.

Imagine the people's shock when Jesus walked in and began teaching without quoting anyone else. Jesus was able to teach in such a manner because His words came entirely from His own authority. Jesus' speaking with such authority revealed who He is—the Son of God—though the people did not recognize it at the time.

- **What makes someone recognizable and believable as an authority on a subject?**

Not only did Jesus reveal His identity through the authority of His word, but He revealed it through His miracles as well. Immediately after Jesus taught in the synagogue with authority, He displayed the legitimacy of that authority by casting a demon out of a man.

People today struggle to believe in the idea of demons. Some prefer to think of demon-possession in the Bible as a misunderstood medical condition that we'd treat differently today, but this idea does not explain the accounts in the Bible. In New Testament times, demons clearly had the power to oppress and possess people in an effort to distract from and distort God's work in the world.

Jesus' power, which flows from His deity, should compel us to follow Him. He has authority over our entire lives because of His identity as the Son of God—He is our Creator (John 1:1-3). If our lives are submitted to Jesus as Lord, then we will develop, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, an attitude of humble obedience to the powerful Son of God, who is also our Savior. And how does Jesus command us to live? He tells us to spread the good news about His power and authority over sin, death, and evil (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 6:7-13).

- **What does it mean for you to submit things in your life to Jesus' power?**
- **What are some things in your life that are easy/difficult to submit to Jesus' power?**

Read Mark 1:35-38.

Jesus knew the purpose of His ministry, but the people around Him often misunderstood it. Both the people of Capernaum and Jesus' own disciples missed the point of Jesus' words and actions. They got caught up in Jesus' rising fame and miraculous healings and were unable to see Jesus' purpose behind it all (Mark 1:21-34). He declared with clarity why He came so that we might know and follow Him. He gathered His disciples to move on—out of Capernaum, away from the fame and the crowds that sought after only His miracles—in order that He might preach elsewhere. The Son of God came to preach the gospel to the world.

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
Jesus' teaching and miracles reveal His divinity.

Mark 1

23-25. "Mark used the terms 'evil [literally 'unclean'] spirit' and 'demon' to refer to the same entity. Demons were evil in themselves, and they made the persons they affected both ceremonially and morally unclean. As difficult as the concept of the demonic is for most people today, it cannot be satisfactorily treated as a primitive explanation for various kinds of physical and psychological illness. A better explanation is that there is much less evidence of the demonic today because Jesus won a decisive, although not yet total, victory over it."[1]

"Regardless of the details of the demonic realm, the point remains that Jesus' power, as demonstrated in His teaching and miracles, supersedes that of demons and every other creature. The typical technique used in exorcisms in Jesus' day was to urge the demon out of someone by referring to the power of one or multiple gods while using magical words and rituals."[2] Just as Jesus referred to no one else but stood on His own authority when teaching, He also commanded the demon out of the man without reference to anyone else's power.

35. It is worth noting that Jesus seemed to view retreating alone with the Father in prayer as essential. Perhaps Jesus was tempted to enjoy His fame and continue to perform miracles for the crowds. Yet Jesus relied on prayer as a way of keeping His mind centered on His true purpose. Although it was not easy to leave behind the popularity and face the coming suffering of the cross, Jesus came to us from God for just this, and so in this purpose He remained.

As believers in Christ, we have access to the same abiding relationship with the Father as we continue on in our God-given purpose. We are invited into the same race, and like Jesus, we can finish well by not giving into temptation and not yielding to the pressures of the world. Part of finishing well requires deep dependence on God through abiding connection with Him in prayer.

99 Essential Doctrines (p. 88, DDG)

Jesus' Deity

Within the person of Jesus Christ, there are two natures—the divine nature and the human nature. Scripture teaches He is fully divine and fully human. His divinity is on display in passages that describe Him as being equal with God (John 1:1-18; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-3). The New Testament also points to the deity of Christ by showing how He possesses attributes that God alone possesses (Mic. 5:2; John 1:4), how He performs works that only God performs (Mark 2:5-12; John 10:28; 17:2), and how He Himself claims to be the Son of God (Matt. 26:63-64; John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5).

TEACHING PLAN

- **What are some practical things that remind you of your mission to share the gospel with others?**

Read Mark 1:39-42.

Jesus, being fully human and fully divine, allowed His heart to be moved by the suffering of our world. His heart of love for the Father and His creation moved Him to action. Jesus carried the concerns of His Father and also experienced them completely as a human. Jesus hates evil and the ways it causes destruction in the world, so Jesus reached out and healed the leper who had come to Him in faith—a perfectly just and compassionate response.

The fact that Jesus was not dispassionate to this man's suffering is a source of great hope to each of us—Jesus cares about our suffering. This is great news to us because as the Son of God, Jesus is the One who has the power to do something about our suffering. By defeating death once and for all on the cross, He has freed us from the power of and eternal enslavement to death, both here and now and yet more fully in the age to come.

- **What are some situations in your school or community that should move you to act with the compassion of Christ?**
- **What kinds of fears or prejudices might hinder us from being moved with the same compassion of Christ?**

In the same way that Jesus' compassionate heart for the man with leprosy caused him to move toward, not away from, the leper, so too Jesus' compassion causes Him to move toward us even in our sinfulness. It is God's nature to be merciful, and being fully God, Jesus extends merciful compassion to those in need.

Jesus' compassion led the Son of God to come face-to-face with our sin as a man and to die for it on the cross. Jesus did not leave us alone in our diseased condition of sin; instead, He entered straight into it to heal us of it. By faith in Him, Jesus takes on our guilt so that He might end it and we might enter into the family of God through Him. But the story doesn't end there. The Son of God could not be defeated by death, the penalty earned by our sin. After substituting Himself in our place and paying our debt, He rose victoriously from the grave to be enthroned at the right hand of God, where He intercedes for us with continued compassion and continues to save sinners who have faith in Him.

- **How will you act in faith in light of the power and compassion of the Son of God?**

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
Jesus' teaching and miracles reveal His divinity.

Mark 1

41-42. "Jesus expressed his compassion for the leper by touching him. Most people would have healed the man first and then touched him. But not Jesus. He knew this man had not felt human touch in a long time, so he reached out to touch him first. By touching the man, Jesus revealed his attitude toward ceremonial law. By touching the leper, he himself would be made ceremonially unclean. Jesus placed love and compassion above ritual and regulation."[3]

Activity

The cross of Jesus best displays His every attribute. In our lesson today, we saw how Jesus publicly presented His power, His purpose, and His compassion. Ask your students to create something that will show how the cross best displays Jesus' power, purpose, and compassion.

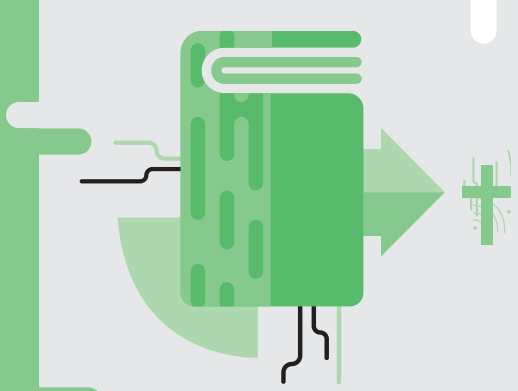
Give them a wide range (if you have the materials) on what they want to create. Their creations should be something that could be shown in the church service or displayed in church. They could create a poster or a sculpture, so long as it somehow shows Jesus' power, purpose, or compassion in the cross. They could make a short comic book or a comic strip. They could compose a poem, or they could make a short skit/video; the video might be an interview with a few theologians, or it could be a short story where someone experiences Jesus' compassion, purpose, or power by thinking on the cross. Whatever students produce is fine (as long as it's fine with you) so long as it displays how Jesus' cross shows His power, His purpose, and His compassion.

You may want to preface this exercise with a discussion to be sure your students can connect these characteristics to the cross. For instance, the cross shows Jesus' power because He was in complete control the entire time, but still endured; it shows His purpose because He displayed the excellence of God's worth while suffering for sinners; it shows His compassion because He endured it all for the very people who put Him on the cross.

Give students some time to prepare their art (they can work solo or in small groups) and then to show it. Ask them how they can treasure the cross's display of Jesus' power, purpose, and compassion so much that they themselves model that power, purpose, and compassion to others.

(p. 89, DDG) Christ Connection

From the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, the people recognized that He was different. Jesus taught with authority and performed miracles to fulfill the purpose of His earthly ministry and show that He is the Son of God, the One who came to proclaim and provide salvation.



JESUS REVEALS HIS POWER
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JESUS CONNECTION
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LIFEWISE QUALITY
COMPASSION – Recognizing the suffering of others and taking action to help.

HEAD
What did Jesus show power and authority over in Mark 1?

What motivated Jesus to heal the man with leprosy? How did Jesus choose to heal him? Why is this so significant?

HEART
Why is it important to have both feelings of compassion for others and display acts of compassion toward others?

What types of people are more challenging for you to show compassion to? How might the fact that Jesus died for all people—regardless of social class, race or attitude—encourage you to help others who are suffering?

HANDS

Do one of the following options:

1. How do you justify not showing compassion to others? (Not enough time, it's someone you don't like very much, etc.) Think of someone you don't understand or struggle to show compassion to. Ask God to give you compassion like His for that person. Write down 2–3 ways you can show that person compassion and ask God to help you to do those things this week.

2. It can be hard to show compassion if we don't know much about what someone else is facing. But there are lots of good resources to help us be prepared. Choose one of the situations below, and go to the link to learn more about how to show compassion to someone going through this situation. Then, apply what you learn by showing compassion to someone you know who struggles with that issue.
    - Death
        - Article: elesplace.org/resources/teens/how-help-grieving-friend
        - Video: youtube.com/watch?v=I2zLCCRT-nE
    - Bullying
        - Article: mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2021/10/how-to-help-a-friend-who-is-being-bullied/
        - Video: teenvogue.com/video/watch/on-set-with-claudia-sulewski-6-ways-to-help-a-friend-who-is-being-bullied
    - Depression
        - Article: youthranch.org/blog/a-teens-quick-guide-to-supporting-a-friend-struggling-with-depression
        - Video: youtube.com/watch?v=UQCzR17HE0w